

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FREQUENCY OF  
DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR AND PEER ACCEPTANCE  
IN PUPILS IN SELECTED ELEMENTARY GRADES

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO  
THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1978

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is indebted to many people who have helped him during his doctoral program and with the completion of this study. He especially extends his gratitude and appreciation to his supervisory committee. The support and guidance of his chairperson, Dr. Mary Kay Dykes, and the other members of his committee, Dr. Bob Algozzine, Dr. Michael Hanes, Dr. William Reid, and Dr. William Ware will always be remembered.

The author thanks the principals, teachers, counselors, secretaries, and pupils who made this study possible. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Rex Schmid who volunteered the services of his EDH 419 class. The conscientious and responsible work of the nine students will always be appreciated. Appreciation is also extended to the author's typist and friend, Leila Cantara, as well as to the Special Education faculty and staff who contributed to the completion of the study through their skills and patience.

Lastly, the author thanks his family, and especially his wife, Lois Schucart-Raviv, for their support and faith throughout his doctoral program.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council  
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June, 1978

Chairperson: Mary K. Dykes  
Major Department: Special Education

The purpose of this study was to determine whether pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary schools differed in their reactions to peers who exhibited disruptive behavior. Researchers have shown that various behavioral characteristics are associated with high and low sociometric status. Investigators who have examined the relationship between the behavioral characteristics of children and their status within the group have used questionnaires, rating scales, and personality tests. Direct measures of behavior which can determine the child's actual classroom behavior rarely have been used in sociometric studies.

Subjects in the study were 150 pupils of five urban elementary schools in a north-central Florida county of 125,000 people. One class each from the first, third, and fifth grade programs of each

school was used in the study. Ten pupils were randomly selected using a table of random numbers for each class. The 150 pupils' disruptive behavior was observed and recorded according to the number and type of disturbance by nine trained university students of special education. Each pupil was observed on three different occasions by three different observers. The disruptive behavior category scale consisted of nine categories of behavior. The total occurrences of disruptive behavior were computed for the three observation periods and each pupil's total disruptive score was calculated by adding up these sums.

After completing the observation period, all members of the 15 classes completed the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale, an instrument designed to measure the acceptance of each pupil within a class. Peer acceptance rating scores were calculated for each of the 150 designated pupils. Peer acceptance rating scores for each of the 150 children and their total disruptive behavior scores were studied using a regression paradigm. Multiple regression procedures were used to test whether the regression lines for the pupils in the first, third, and fifth grade programs were parallel.

The F-ratio for the differences between these three slopes was found not to be significant. The overall relationship between the frequency of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance of pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs was not differentially determined.

In a grade by grade analysis of the relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance, it was found that there



was a statistically significant negative correlation between total disruptive occurrences and peer acceptance rating scores among pupils in first grade programs. This finding should be regarded as tentative until replicated.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Recently, the problem of disruptive pupils in Florida resulted in the commissioning of a Governor's Task Force on Disrupted Youth (Rollin, 1973). The commission found that while the problem of the disruptive pupil was not new, disruptions by pupils were occurring more frequently and were involving greater numbers of children.

Educators have been concerned with the problem of the disruptive pupil who has interfered with the academic and social learning processes of the classroom (Hops, Walker, & Hutton, 1973). The disruptive child has been characterized as one who "acts out," violating classroom rules, structures, and procedures (Hops et al., 1973). Generally, the child has displayed a high frequency of disruptive behavior such as disturbing the class, ignoring the teacher's directions and instructions, showing physical and verbal aggression toward peers, and destroying property. The child has been a problem to teachers, peers, and him/herself, forcing the classroom teacher to spend a disproportionately large amount of time managing these "acting out behaviors" (Hops et al., 1973).

Classroom teachers have tried various management techniques in dealing with the disruptive child, yet the problem of disruptive behavior in the classroom has continued to be of growing concern among educators for acquiring improved methods of managing the disruptive child has been evidenced by the large body of recent literature pertaining to classroom behavior management techniques (Alexander & Apfel, 1976; Azrin & Powers, 1975; Drabman, Spitalnik, & O'Leary, 1973; Fagen, Long, & Stevens, 1975; Kazdin, 1973; Kurtz & Neisworth, 1976; Patterson, 1974). The authors of these programs focused on reducing the frequency of a pupil's disruptive behavior as well as on increasing the pupil's capability for self-control. In describing their behavior management techniques, the authors neglected the subject of peer relations. A few researchers (Barrish, Saunders, & Wolf, 1969; Herman & Tramontana, 1971) have used the peer pressure of group consequences to modify disruptive behavior successfully. Barrish et al. (1969) formulated a behavior game in which children in a class were divided into two teams. When any member of a team left his/her seat or talked-out, the team lost a minute of free time. By using observers, the researchers were able to state that the frequency of disruptive behavior was reduced to a significant degree while the behavior game was in effect. Authors of these programs used peer pressure to reduce disruptive behavior and did not attempt to improve the peer relationships within the class. The importance of ameliorating peer relations in the classroom was stressed by Fox, Luszki, and Schmuck (1966) who emphasized that

an improvement in peer relations could facilitate the pupil's academic achievement as well as personal adjustment. In designing a comprehensive behavior management system, educators should consider the effect of the system on peer relations of pupils.

In two studies, the authors (Drabman & Lahey, 1974; Drabman, Spitalnik, & Spitalnik, 1974) examined the effects of classroom behavior management systems on the peer acceptance of pupils who exhibited disruptive behavior. The researcher asked all of the children in a class to respond to three questions relating to the sociometric status of their peers. The questions concerned responsibility, funniness, and friendliness. After the treatment phases, when the whole class's free time was contingent on the behavior of the most disruptive pupils, the disruptive pupils were chosen by their classmates to be more responsible than they had been during the baseline phases. The success of the researchers was limited in that the disruptive children were still chosen as friends less frequently than were the other pupils; however, the studies of Drabman and Lahey (1974) and Drabman, Spitalnik, and Spitalnik (1974) were important because the researchers were the first to use both sociometric techniques and direct measures of observation.

Sociometric techniques have been used as an appropriate methodology for investigating the interpersonal relations concerning the positive, neutral, and negative attractions within groups (Lindzey & Byrne, 1968). Sociometric devices have usually

consisted of various statements which are used as means of assessing the attractions and/or repulsions within a given group.

The initiator of sociometry, Jacob L. Moreno, provided the impetus for its use as an important tool (Lindzey & Byrne, 1968). In 1932, Moreno asked each pupil in a public school in New York City to choose the two classmates whom he/she preferred to have sit nearby. In an analysis of the pupil choices, an underlying social structure was revealed that differed from the teachers' perceptions of their own classrooms (Gronlund, 1959).

Since Moreno's original use of sociometric methods in the public schools, use of the tool has expanded to a great variety of situations. Sociometric methodologies have been applied to colleges, factories, prisons, military installations, and other settings where interpersonal relations might have been improved by their use (Bjerstedt, 1956). Achievement, personality, self-concept, and adjustment were some of the public school related topics that have been investigated through the use of sociometric instruments (Ahlbrand & Doyle, 1976).

Investigators who have examined the relationship between sociometric choice and personality variables have relied on measures in which (a) the subjects described themselves, (b) the subjects were rated by teachers, (c) the subjects were asked to answer questionnaires, or (d) the subjects were asked to respond to projective measures (Lindzey & Byrne, 1968). These measures of personality characteristics and behavior traits were subjective and, consequently, may not have been adequate measures of accurate

information related to the actual versus perceived behavior of the subjects.

Johnson and Bolstad (1973) stated that the use of behavioral data was becoming a primary tool for diagnosing and treating human problems. The most frequently used method for determining the actual behavior of pupils has been direct observation (Nelson & Bowles, 1975), principally by educators interested in behavior management and observable behavioral objectives (Slavin, 1975).

In comparison with rating scales and questionnaires, direct observation has been an efficient tool in supplying more data on how children actually behave in the classroom. Direct systematic observation has also provided a better insight into which specific intervention strategies may be most appropriate for dealing with a specific disruptive pupil (Forness, Guthrie, & Hall, 1976).

Knowledge of pupil interaction may be a major foundation for designing and implementing effective behavior management strategies. Information about the children's interactions may help the teacher better pursue behavioral objectives that will increase the opportunities for pupil learning in the academic as well as social areas (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1971). In order to maximize the children's abilities, teachers will have to know more about their pupils than their IQ and achievement scores (Fox et al., 1966).

In setting up a classroom environment that is most conducive to learning and growth, a teacher may want to gather pertinent information regarding the relationships of his/her pupils. It

would be beneficial to the management of the class, however, for the teacher to have data available on the relationship of peer acceptance and disruptive behavior at that particular grade level.

Since children at different grade levels may not respond in the same manner to their peers' disruptive behavior, data are needed on the dynamics of pupil interpersonal relations at various grade levels. One such study was conducted by Kuhlen and Lee (1943) who reported that adolescents in sixth, ninth, and twelfth grade programs described different personality characteristics at each level as being factors for peer acceptance or rejection. For example, at the twelfth grade level, highly accepted adolescents were rated as being more restless and socially aggressive than were low status students. Conversely, restlessness was one of the characteristics used to denote low status youngsters at the sixth grade level.

Other researchers have conducted studies in which they each tried to determine which behavior traits were related to high and low sociometric status at one particular grade level (Bonney, 1943a; Bonney & Powell, 1953; Hartup, Glazer, & Charlesworth, 1967; McGuire, 1973; Yellott, Liem, & Cowen, 1969). Kuhlen and Lee (1943) differed from the aforementioned researchers in their attempt to determine which behavior traits were associated with high and low peer acceptance at three grade levels; however, no researchers examining sociometric status and behavior traits have used direct observation as a means of measuring pupils' actual

behavior. Researchers have relied on personality inventories and rating scales to describe the behavior traits of their subjects.

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between classroom disruptive behavior and peer acceptance among pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs. The study was conducted by using systematic observation to determine the frequency of disruptive behavior of each class member during given observation periods. Peer acceptance was determined by the ratings of liking, disliking, and indifference of each class member toward each of his classmates. If there were differences in that relationship at various grade levels, the understanding of these differences might enable educators to design more effective behavior management techniques for teachers to use in dealing with disruptive pupils. Often, teachers have spent an inordinate amount of time trying to manage disruptive pupils. The teacher who has done this unknowingly may have been using poor management techniques, especially if it were found that children at that particular grade level may not have negative feelings toward their disruptive peers. Then, perhaps the teacher should alter his/her methods of dealing with disruptive behavior, letting the children devise their own classroom rules. By doing this, the teacher might be providing the pupils with an opportunity to discuss and clarify their feelings about the effects of disruptive behavior on their classroom environment. Rules that have been formulated by class members may have more of an impact on the disruptive pupils, modifying their



behavior. The situation described is one in which knowledge of children's attitudes toward peer disruptive behavior could benefit educators and pupils.

### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the frequency of observable disruptive behavior and peer acceptance among pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary schools. The primary objective of the study was to determine if a pupil's elementary grade level can be correlated with the relationship between the frequency of observable disruptive behavior and peer acceptance.

### Definition of Terms

Peer Acceptance--the degree of liking or disliking of a classmate as measured on the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale.

Peer Acceptance Rating--the expression of how each pupil feels about his classmates. This rating is determined by the marking of the smiling or frowning face which expresses the child's feeling toward each of his peers.

Sociometric Status--the rank or position of a child in a group. The child's rank is determined by his/her rating or score on a sociometric instrument that measures attractions and repulsions within a group.

Systematic Observation--the planned, methodical watching of public and visible events.

### Delimitations

The primary delimitation of the study was the geographical location of the investigation. The study was conducted in urban public schools of a Southern county of 125,000 people. This may limit the generalizability of the results to other locales.

The method used to select subjects for the study was another delimitation. Children selected at random as subjects for the study were verified as being in the expected grade for children their age. If a child were found to be repeating a grade, one of the pupils identified as an alternate was used in the study.

The system used to measure the frequency of disruptive behavior was not sensitive to the magnitude of each instance of disruptive behavior. For example, a tap on the shoulder and a punch to the arm were each counted as one instance of disruptive behavior. Regardless of the magnitude of the disruptive behavior, it was recorded as a disruptive incident. These three imposed restrictions have limited the findings of the study.

### Limitations

There were five limitations that were imposed on the procedures of the study. The schools involved in the study were used only after securing the principals' permission. Teachers

volunteered or were chosen by principals to have their classes participate in the study. It was impossible to choose classes at random.

The subtle differences in classroom atmospheres and teacher management strategies and their effects on the disruptiveness and peer acceptance of pupils were impossible to control. Another unavoidable circumstance was that the classroom and personal events that preceded observation periods and the administration of the rating scale were different for every child and impossible to control.

It was impossible to control for the child's physical position in the classroom. The child's location in the classroom may have affected both the pupil's disruptive behavior and the acceptance ratings of classmates.

Another limitation that was beyond the control of the researcher was the extent to which the presence of an observer influenced teacher and pupil behavior. Having only one observer in a classroom during the observation periods was an attempt to limit the reactive effects of the observer on the pupils and teachers; however, it was impossible to determine to what degree the pupils and teachers were influenced by the observers. These limitations were the major restrictions that were unavoidable in designing and conducting the study.

### Summary

In Chapter I, the problem of disruptive behavior was discussed. It was explained that although educators have formulated various techniques to help in the management of the disruptive child, classroom disruption has continued to be a widespread and serious problem. One reason that the problem of disruptive behavior has not been alleviated may be that educators who have designed management techniques have focused on reducing disruptive behavior and largely have ignored the relationship between peer relations and disruptive behavior. Determining whether there are differences in the relationship between peer acceptance and disruptive behavior at various grade levels may help educators in developing more effective behavior management systems.

In Chapter II, the review of literature, the problem will be discussed in relation to past research in the area of sociometric status as well as in the context of theories of child development that pertain to the child's attitudes toward his/her peers' behavior. The procedures of the study will be presented in Chapter III. The results will be presented in Chapter IV, with a discussion of the results following in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature herein pertains to studies and theories related to the sociometric status of pupils. The review concerns the following topics: the relationship of behavior and sociometric status, the stability of sociometric status, the methods that have been used to evaluate behavior, and the contrasting theories pertaining to the development of children's attitudes toward their peers.

#### Behavior Traits as Related to Sociometric Status

Behavior and personality characteristics have both been examined in attempting to understand why children have high or low sociometric status. Various methods, including rating scales, questionnaires, and mental health inventories, have been implemented by researchers investigating which behavior traits were related to high and low sociometric status. In the following section of reviewed literature, studies are discussed that were conducted to determine which behavior traits appeared to be factors of high or low sociometric status.

### Behavior Traits Related to High Sociometric Status

In examining the results of several studies (Bonney, 1943a; Bonney, 1947; Bonney & Powell, 1953; Bonney, 1955), it was found generally that traits such as friendliness, cheerfulness, cooperativeness, a willingness to conform to classroom rules, and participation in group activities appeared to characterize pupils with high sociometric status.

Bonney (1943a) first investigated the differences in behavior characteristics of pupils in the fourth grade with high and low sociometric status as determined through the use of a sociometric technique, popularity questions. Pupils were asked to choose which classmates they preferred to have join them in various situations such as playing games or working on a class project. The behavior traits of the children were described by the ratings the pupils received on a rating scale when the investigator asked them to characterize their classmates. After comparing each pupil's sociometric status as derived from the popularity question with the behavior traits attributed to each child from the rating scale, the relationship between sociometric status and behavior traits was examined. Pupils with high sociometric status were characterized by their peers as being more friendly, happy, attractive, and cheerful than pupils with lower sociometric status. Similar results were found again, in 1947, when Bonney conducted a study of five pupils with high sociometric status. He found that these students were characterized by conformity, emotional stability, social aggressiveness, and attitudes of friendliness and cooperativeness.

In two later studies, the behavior of children in the first and second grades was examined (Bonney, 1955; Bonney & Powell, 1953). A significant difference in behavior was found between children of high and low sociometric status in both play and classroom situations. High sociometric status pupils were found to conform more frequently to classroom requirements, to smile more often, to participate more frequently in group activities, and to associate with more children during free play and activity periods. Peretti (1973) also found that sixth graders had similar criteria for accepting or rejecting classmates. Traits such as understandingness, cheerfulness, and enthusiasm were ascribed to the most accepted peers. Being aggressive, rude, and dull were the traits most often selected in explaining the children's reasons for rejection of a classmate. Peretti further stated that specific behavior traits were associated with the acceptance and rejection of classmates at the sixth grade level.

Unlike the studies previously mentioned, Kuhlen and Lee (1943) indicated that it was important to consider age trends when investigating peer acceptance. The subjects used in studying the effects of personality traits on peer interaction were 25% of the most popular and 25% of the least popular sixth, ninth, and twelfth graders. Kuhlen and Lee found that certain personality traits that were related to acceptance one year, might be related to rejection the following year. For example, at the twelfth grade level, highly accepted adolescents tended to be more restless and socially aggressive than the low status youngsters. Conversely,

at the sixth grade level, restlessness was one of the characteristics used in describing low status children. Again, although personality characteristics were regarded differently in different grades, students with high sociometric status were most often described as being friendly, cheerful, good-looking, happy, and more likely to initiate activities than students in the lower sociometric positions at all grade levels.

It has already been noted which traits have been generally ascribed to children with high sociometric status. Although Kuhlen and Lee (1943) stressed the importance of age trends, the researchers of the aforementioned studies have pointed out that similar behavior traits were considered more acceptable and were associated more often with high sociometric status at all age levels. It is also important to note in examining research on sociometric status that particular behaviors were found to be related to low sociometric status. As was the case in studies of high sociometric status, researchers studying low sociometric status have focused little attention on the possible effects of age trends.

#### Behavior Traits Related to Low Sociometric Status

Researchers have investigated the relationship between the behavioral characteristics of children and low sociometric status. In their research, authors have examined preschool and handicapped children as well as normal elementary school children.

Preschool children who had been characterized as aggressive were found to have low sociometric status. Hartup, Glazer, and



Charlesworth (1967) determined that the specific behavior traits often displayed by children with low sociometric status were (a) annoyance of others, (b) unwillingness to share, and (c) attacking and blaming others. Similar aggressive behaviors were noted by Moore (1967) to be negatively correlated with popularity in nursery school. The aggressive children fought, yelled, hurt others, and said angry things. Moore pointed out that sociometric status and behavior characteristics were not completely independent measures since children were the source of both measures. In another study of preschool social status, Dunnington (1957) stated that unpopular children were more aggressive in their doll play situations than were popular children. Highly aggressive male children were reported to be unpopular also by McGuire (1973) when he studied aggression in preschool children. Unlike the other studies, McGuire emphasized a difference between aggressive preschool boys and girls; while aggressive boys tended to be unpopular, the aggressive girls tended to be popular.

Low sociometric status has also been found to be prevalent among retarded children. In 1950, Johnson first speculated that educable mentally retarded (EMR) children were rejected by their peers because they exhibited anti-social, aggressive behaviors. Gottlieb and Budoff (1974) asked regular classmates to rate their EMR peers on a sociometric questionnaire and then to indicate their reasons for their ratings. In most cases, the rejection of the EMR child was reported to be related to his/her verbally

aggressive behavior. Gottlieb and Budoff stated that there was a need to examine the relationship between specific behavior patterns and social status in order to determine which specific kinds of behavior were more closely associated with social rejection than others. Gottlieb and Budoff noted that it had to be determined whether the patterns of relationship between social status and behavior were similar for EMR and normal children.

Learning disabled children, particularly white and/or female children, also have been found to have low sociometric status (Bryan, 1974). After studying the social relationships of learning disabled children and their peers in the regular classroom, Bryan stated that lack of peer popularity may be another symptom of learning disabilities. Bryan concluded that since a reduction in disruptive behavior may alter the peer status of a learning disabled child, there was a need for educational programs with social/affective components. The same group of learning disabled children was still found to be more rejected and less accepted than the other members of the class when Bryan (1976) replicated her earlier study. The low sociometric status of these learning disabled children continued for two consecutive years and was not affected by the change of members in the class. Bryan stated that it could not be determined which specific behaviors resulted in rejection by peers.

In examining the findings of several studies, it was ascertained that students with low sociometric status may also

be characterized as maladjusted (Baron, 1951; Bedoian, 1953; Bjerstedt, 1956; Grossman & Wrighter, 1948; Northway, 1944; Scandrette, 1953; Yellott, Liem, & Cowen, 1969). Northway (1944) noted that although pupils with low sociometric status were characterized by inadequate adjustment, the specific problems of social adjustment varied from one individual to another. Northway had studied the behavior of 20 fifth and sixth grade children who were least often chosen on a sociometric test of popularity. After examining their behavior patterns, Northway classified the children into three distinct groups. The first group was classified as "recessive" children who were described as listless, having no interest in their environment, and making little effort toward adjustment. "Socially uninterested" children who had well developed individual interests but showed little interest in social interaction constituted the second group. The third group was comprised of "socially ineffective" children who were noisy, arrogant, rebellious, and delinquent in classroom activities. In another study, Bjerstedt (1956) investigated the sociometric choices of children by asking 515 Swedish pupils, in grades three through eight, their motivations for their choices. More than 50% of the motivations relating to negative choices referred to poor discipline during work hours or to violations of the group norms.

Yellott, Liem, and Cowen (1969) discovered that there was a stronger relationship between teacher estimates of pupil adjustment and sociometric status for girls in the third grade than

for boys in the third grade. In addition, girls who failed in the academic areas were found more likely to be designated maladjusted by their classmates on a sociometric instrument, while boys who failed academically were not chosen as maladjusted. Boys' lack of achievement was evidently more readily rationalized, isolated, or found to be irrelevant (Yellott et al., 1969). One question raised by these investigators was how achievement for girls and boys could affect their peer status in later years. Another important question in the study concerned changes in the children's behavior through the elementary school years. Yellott et al. questioned whether a child's adjustment and sociometric status would be affected by changes in the child's behavior.

Other studies pertaining to adjustment and sociometric status involved the use of personality inventories for evaluating adjustment. Grossman and Wrighter (1948) noted that sixth-graders with high sociometric status had significantly higher adjustment scores on the California Test of Personality than those pupils with low sociometric status. Similar findings were reported by Scandrette (1953), who used the same personality inventory with eighth grade pupils. Bedoian (1953) and Baron (1951) found that sixth grade pupils with high sociometric status had higher adjustment scores on the Mental Health Analysis Questionnaire than pupils with low sociometric status.

Researchers have provided information as to which behavior characteristics were associated with low sociometric status among

preschool, elementary, and special education pupils. The importance of examining which specific behaviors were most related to acceptance and rejection was emphasized. The problem common to these studies was the researchers' reliance on indirect measures in trying to determine a child's actual behavior.

#### Methods Used to Evaluate Behavior Characteristics

In the studies previously discussed, researchers were concerned with the behavior that has characterized children with high and low sociometric status. The methods used by these investigators in trying to determine the children's behaviors (that would be correlated with their sociometric status) did not include direct observation. Rating scales, on which children categorized each other's behavior (Bonney, 1943a), teacher ratings of children's behavior (Bonney, 1947), and teacher estimates of pupil personality and adjustment (Yellott, Liem, & Cowen, 1969) were used. In the same manner, researchers used personality inventories to assess the actual behavioral performances of children (Baron, 1951; Bedoian, 1953; Grossman & Wrighter, 1948; Scandrette, 1943). The indirect measures of behavior, such as the rating scales, personality inventories, and questionnaires used by researchers cannot be considered true indicators of a child's actual behavioral performance. The use of direct systematic observation would have enabled researchers to evaluate more accurately the behavior patterns of the children.

Lorber's study (1966) is an example of an investigation into the relationship between peer acceptance and behavior characteristics that relied on an indirect measure to evaluate pupil behavior. Lorber administered the Ohio Social Acceptance Scale to children in nine fifth and sixth grade classes. The children were then classified into three groups on the basis of whether their social acceptance scores on the measure were high, medium, or low. Teacher ratings were obtained on each of the five behavioral considerations: relationships with other children, attitude toward group control, need for attention, stability, and aggressiveness. Using a scale of 1 to 100, teachers rated each pupil in the five behavior categories. This numerical expression was considered representative of each child's classroom behavior. Lorber reported that the pupils who were rated as having low sociometric status had poorer teacher ratings on general behavior than pupils with medium and high sociometric status. The validity of the teacher ratings is suspect and, therefore, the validity of this study is questionable. It is important to examine whether teachers' behavioral evaluations of pupils are accurate representations of observed behavior or merely a reflection of the teachers' personal value perceptions (Yellott et al., 1969).

Investigators examining the relationship between behavior and sociometric status have used tools that relied on teacher and classmate perceptions of the pupils' behavior. These rating scales and questionnaires have not provided systematic, objective measure

of an individual's behavior characteristics. Using direct systematic observation to evaluate a child's classroom behavior would yield more valid information as to how children actually behave in the classroom.

### Stability of Sociometric Status

The stability of sociometric status has been examined over various periods of time by several investigators (Bonney, 1943b, 1943c; Bryan, 1976; Gronlund, 1959; Jennings, 1950; Sheare, 1976). Bonney (1943b, 1943c) studied the stability of sociometric status scores over four one-year intervals. Forty-eight second grade pupils were given sociometric tests as they passed through each successive grade level, up to the fifth grade. The stability of sociometric status was calculated by correlating the pupils' relative sociometric status between grade levels. Coefficients ranged from .67 to .84 for the one-year intervals between grade levels. Achievement tests and intelligence tests were administered to the same pupils each year as a basis of comparison. Coefficients of stability for the achievement test results ranged from .75 to .86. Similarly, Jennings (1950) studied the sociometric status of 133 girls, ranging in age from 12 to 16 years. In the study, he reported the stability of negative choices as well as positive ones. Jennings also noted that rejection status was as stable as acceptance status over an eight-month period. Bryan reported (1974, 1976) that learning disabled children who were classified

as having low sociometric status maintained their low status for at least two years, when their status was re-evaluated. Gronlund (1959) stated that the percentage of individuals in a particular sociometric category remained fairly constant from grades three to ten.

Sheare (1976) was the only investigator who found sociometric status not to be stable when he investigated the relationship between peer acceptance and self-concept of pupils in the third, fourth, and fifth grade programs in an elementary school. Through administration of the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale, Sheare found that significant changes in the level of self-concept did not influence the level of peer acceptance in a single year. After examining the changes over a two-year period, he concluded that the child's peer acceptance and self-concept were related in that change recorded on one measure was accompanied by a change in the same direction on the other measure.

Most investigators examining the stability of sociometric status have found that without intervention the pupil's sociometric status remained basically constant during the child's school career. Awareness of the relationship between peer acceptance and disruptive behavior at various grade levels may facilitate educators' attempts to modify the sociometric status of pupils.



### Modification of Sociometric Status

Modification of a child's sociometric status might be important to that child's degree of success in school. By raising the pupil's sociometric status, it may be possible to improve the pupil's academic achievement and personal adjustment. A few investigators have recently reported unsuccessful attempts to modify the sociometric status of designated pupils (Drabman & Lahey, 1974; Drabman, Spitalnik, & Spitalnik, 1974). This may have been due to numerous flaws in the methodologies used by the researchers.

Drabman and Lahey (1974) investigated the effects of a behavior modification program on a ten-year-old female. The program employed feedback with no additional contingencies in an ABAB design which provided the target child with feedback during the first and third conditions. The disruptive behavior of the target child and her classmates was monitored by direct observation. The researchers stated that the girl was more disruptive than her peers during baseline conditions, and less disruptive than her peers during treatment phases. The sociometric status of the girl changed after the original initiation and withdrawal of the treatment. Her status did not improve when the treatment was repeated; however, Drabman and Lahey stated that the change in the pupils' attitudes toward the girl was not accurately measured due to the inadequacy of the selected sociometric instrument. Twice each week for ten weeks, the teacher read three sociometric requests:

- (1) If you were on Apollo 17 as an astronaut and you were going on a long, long trip to the moon, who would you want to take along? Remember to choose only one person that you would want to be with for a long time; a person you could get along with very well.
- (2) You are doing a hard job and you need someone who is very responsible and grown up; who would you pick? Remember to pick only one person and to pick a very grown-up person.
- (3) If I asked you to help me pick a person to receive today's happy face award, who would you pick? Remember to pick only one person and pick a very deserving person. (Drabman & Lahey, 1974, pp. 593-594)

The children responded to the three questions by coloring, on a map of the class, the desk of the pupil they selected. The children were only allowed one vote per question and could not vote for themselves. The map was used to measure the sociometric status of the target girl on each of the three questions. The problem with the instrument occurred as the children became bored with the task and filled in the map before the questions were asked (Drabman & Lahey, 1974).

Drabman, Spitalnik, and Spitalnik (1974) investigated the effects of four different reinforcement programs on the sociometric status and disruptive behavior of 23 first grade children. This study was unique in that it was the first attempt to show that "sociometric status can be manipulated through behavior modification without directly reinforcing sociometric selection" (Drabman et al., 1974, p. 99). The reinforcement programs consisted of

- (1) individual reinforcement determined by individual performance;
  - (2) group reinforcement determined by the behavior of the most disruptive child;
  - (3) group reinforcement determined by the behavior of the least disruptive child;
  - (4) group reinforcement determined by the behavior of a randomly selected child.
- (Drabman et al., 1974, p. 93)

Twice during each reinforcement phase, children were asked to respond to sociometric questions of responsibility, friendship, and funniness. The questions were as follows:

- (1) I want you to pick the funniest person in our class. Remember, I'm not on the paper.
  - (2) If you were an astronaut on Apollo 16 and you were going on a long, long trip to the moon, who would you want to take along? Remember to choose only one person that you want to be with for a long time, a person who you get along with very well.
  - (3) You are doing a very hard job and you need someone who is very responsible and grown up; who would you pick? Remember, pick only one person, and pick a very grown-up person.
- (Drabman et al., 1974, p. 95)

Disruptive children were predicted to be judged less funny as they behaved better during the treatment phases. The two disruptive target children were chosen as "funniest" less often with each successive token phase. Disruptive children were also seldom chosen as friends throughout all stages of the study.

The most important sociometric change noted by Drabman et al. was related to the responsibility question. Classmates of the disruptive target children selected the behavior problem child as more responsible when group reinforcement was contingent on the target child's behavior. The probability of the disruptive child

being chosen as responsible was significantly greater ( $p = 0.049$ ) in this reinforcement phase. This occurred even though the target children's inappropriate behavior during the reinforcement phase did not differ from their disruptive behavior in the other reinforcement phases. According to the researchers, the peers viewed the target children as being more responsible (question #3) during the treatment phase because of their potential in determining free time for the group.

Of the three sociometric questions in the studies, the question pertaining to friendship (question #2) seemed to be the most important discriminator of peer acceptance. Drabman and Lahey (1974) and Drabman, Spitalnik, and Spitalnik (1974) reported that they were unsuccessful in changing the friendship status of the disruptive children. Their attempts to change the sociometric status of pupils in such a short time (ten weeks) seemed to be a major shortcoming in these studies.

In the findings of one study, Ahlbrand and Doyle (1976) showed that it was possible to change sociometric status. The researchers found that they were able to make positive changes in the sociometric status of children in grades four through six. They did this by changing the structure of the classroom groups to allow pupils of low sociometric status to interact with younger classmates. This intervention enhanced the low status children's ability to interact positively with pupils of their own age group.

The possibility of modifying sociometric status of pupils is worth further investigation. Improving the sociometric status

of pupils may not only benefit the low status children, but may benefit the whole class, in that harmonious peer relations aid in the academic and social development of all pupils. More understanding of the relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance should be helpful in facilitating the development of intervention programs that may make significant changes in the sociometric status of disruptive children.

#### Acceptance of Peer Behavior and Chronological Age

Researchers have investigated children's sociometric status from varying perspectives. The first part of this review commented on the problems in the methodologies used to examine the relationship between sociometric status and behavior. Investigations pertaining to the stability and modification of sociometric status were reported. It was found that there had been no examination of the relationship between systematic observable disruptive behavior and peer acceptance. To investigate whether the relationship between these two variables differs at various grade levels, it was necessary to examine a new body of literature. The attitude of children toward their disruptive peers may or may not be a function of their specific age levels. In this section, the opposing theories pertaining to this question will be reported. Supporters of one school of thought have believed that age changes have a direct effect on the child's attitudes toward peers; the others have stated that individual differences among children

preclude the possibility of specific age groups of children reacting in a predictable manner toward their peers' behaviors. Theorists in the field of child development have maintained different perspectives in their explanations of the child's attitudes toward peers.

#### Child's Age Affects Acceptance

In this section, two theories that relate to the effects of age changes on the child's attitude toward peer behavior are explored. Piaget's theory of the consciousness of rules (1932), a developmental theory, and the child's drive for affiliation (Crandall, 1967), a psychoanalytic theory, both address the changes in the child's relationships with adults and peers throughout the elementary school years.

Consciousness of rules. Changes in responsiveness to peer behavior may be explained by Piaget's (1932) theory of the consciousness of rules. Piaget stated that developmental changes in the child's cognitive thought processes influenced a child's judgment as well as behavior. Piaget conceived of the child's consciousness of social rules as moving through a sequence of three stages.

In the first stage, the child has been described as attempting to follow the ordered rules imposed by elders. The child has been characterized as knowing nothing of the reasons behind these rules but perceiving the rules as unchangeable because they have come from adult authority. The second stage, beginning at about age

seven, has been marked by increased social conformity among children. The child has been described as placing greater importance on social interaction with peers. The cooperation among peers has been said to initiate a gradual decline in the strong adherence to the rules set up by authority. At about age ten, during the third stage of the consciousness of rules, the child has undergone the most extensive change in attitudes toward standards of behavior. The child has been described as no longer feeling obligated to follow rules that have been imposed by adults. The child has been depicted at this stage of development as willing to formulate and accept new standards based on the peer group's perception of what is acceptable behavior. In this stage, rules were no longer considered external and coercive; the child's attitude toward rules has been "modified and adapted to the tendencies of the group" (Piaget, 1932, p. 62).

Affiliative drive. Bowerman and Kinch (1959) stated that during elementary school years, the source of the child's value orientation changed from the adult imposed values to the peer group values. This change in attitude has been explained by the child's affiliative drive (Crandall, 1967), affecting behavior differently at different age levels.

The affiliative drive has been characterized as pertaining to the child's need for approval from a person or group with whom that child has identified. Acceptance from the person or group gives the child a feeling of vicarious or acquired status. The

individual deriving status is motivated to obtain and retain the approval of the group or person by meeting their standards and expectations (Crandall, 1967).

The affiliative drive has been described as being strongest during early childhood when children derive status from their dependent identification with their parents. During this period the child's behavior is motivated by a need to meet parents' expectations and retain their approval. Since teachers are regarded as parent surrogates (Crandall, 1967), the young child relates to teachers in a similar fashion. The child seeks teacher approval and believes that adhering to the teacher's standards and expectations brings status; therefore, the child in a first grade program would expect classmates to conform to teacher imposed standards of behavior and the child would approve of this conformity.

During late childhood, the child's affiliative drive has been seen as both diminishing in intensity and being redirected away from parents and teachers toward age-mates. Children's peer group behaviors have been said to reflect a need to seek and establish a social identity in relation to equals (Crandall, 1967). The nine or ten-year-old child begins to search for a personal identity within the group. This identity would no longer be reliant solely on adult expectations, as it would move in line with the child's fundamental personality trends, temperamental predispositions, level of activity, and social responsiveness. At this point in development, peers provide primary and derived



status. Children at this age have been depicted as no longer subscribing to the belief that only parents and teachers can determine what is right.

According to the theory of affiliation, a child's reaction to any behavior by his peers might change with time. He might react differently to disruptive behavior in an upper elementary school program than would a child in a first grade program. Children in the first grade are likely to disapprove of peers' disruptive behavior depending on the personality characteristics of the group. The drive to affiliate with the peer group at a later age is more likely to determine what is favorable and acceptable behavior without heeding a teacher's imposed guidelines.

In summary, Piaget's theory of the consciousness of rules and Crandall's affiliative drive theory both would lead to the expectation of similar developments in the behavior patterns of children during their elementary school years. According to both theories, it would be likely that changes in a child's perceptions of rules, adults, and peers would affect his reactions toward peers exhibiting disruptive behavior. The development of these reactions should be observable at the first, third, and fifth grade levels.

#### Individual Differences

The theorists reported herein have stated that individual differences, rather than age, have been the critical factors in determining a child's attitudes toward peers. Research on

children's attitudes toward their peers may help solve the problem of which of these theories is more valid. Ausubel and Sullivan (1970) discussed the possibility that a child's age level is not an important factor in the formulation of attitudes toward peers' behavior. Children's variability in approaches to peer group experiences may reflect the impact of early socialization experiences within the family circle. The child's reaction to peers would then be influenced by (a) early upbringing, (b) ordinal position in the family, (c) sex of siblings, and (d) parental attitudes such as overprotection, rejection, overevaluation, and over and under-domination. The child's cultural value system, formed largely by those factors, would help to determine the child's personality, including criteria for evaluating worth of person, general attitudes toward children, and moral values.

Huston-Stein and Baltes (1976) stated that the examination of developmental changes in intergroup or intraindividual differences could provide more interesting information than merely looking at simple age changes. Similarities among different age groups could be a function of sociocultural conditions or strong situational influences that screen ontogenetic patterns. In this view, chronological age would become less powerful and interindividual differences would increase with development.

Dinkmeyer (1965) stressed that each child was a unique human being with different rates of growth and development. Each individual had unique inherited capacities. The child's personality

development would depend upon environmental stimulation and the child's opportunity for exploration. Dinkmeyer maintained that there were various levels of development for any behavior pattern. He reported variations among individuals at specific chronological ages as well as differences within children. The typical child was said to have many ages, for example, (a) mental age, (b) achievement age, and (c) social-emotional age, as well as various other developmental stages. Baer (1970) stated that the consideration of chronological age as a crucial variable in developmental psychology was theoretically shortsighted.

In summary, the theorists discussed in this section emphasized the concept of there being great individual differences even between children at the same age and grade level. According to the theories of individual differences, children could not be expected to react to their peers' disruptive behavior with any single, predictable response for their age or grade level. Rather, the child's response to the disruptive behavior of peers would be considered a part of the child's individual pattern of behavior. Theories of individual differences have minimized the importance of age as a factor in determining a child's behavior and attitude. Other theorists have maintained the importance of the child's age as having a great deal to do with his/her attitude and behavior. The consciousness of rules and affiliative drive theories are opposed to the theories of individual differences in their views of the development of children.

Studying children's attitudes toward their peers' disruptive behavior at various age levels may yield information to support or refute these differing theories of child development.

### Summary of Related Literature

Researchers who have examined the relationship between socio-metric status and behavioral characteristics have relied on teacher ratings rather than direct observation to establish a pupil's behavioral traits. In order for educators to be able to design more effective intervention programs, information regarding the particular connection between directly observed disruptive behavior and peer acceptance must be obtained. Since it is possible that children judge their peers' behavior differently at different grade levels, it is necessary to study a range of elementary grade levels. Through investigation and comparison of varied pupil responses to peers' disruptive behavior in the first, third, and fifth grades, it may be possible for educators to isolate and modify factors that contribute to the low peer acceptance of pupils. Information gained from such an investigation may be useful in designing strategies for management that will enable teachers to cope more competently with the disruptive pupil.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Disruptive behavior has been identified as a major problem for teachers and pupils. Various techniques for dealing with disruptive pupils have been advocated for teachers. In formulating the management techniques, educators seldom have considered the system's role on the interpersonal relationships of the class members. The purpose of this study was to determine whether pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary schools differed in their reactions to peers who exhibited disruptive behavior. Researchers have reported that various behavior characteristics are associated with high and low sociometric status. Investigators who have examined the relationship between the behavior characteristics of children and their status within the group have used questionnaires, rating scales, and personality tests to characterize children's behavior. Sociometric instruments have been used to determine the peer status of children. In this study a peer rating scale and a direct systematic observation scale were used to investigate the relationship between disruptive behavior and sociometric status. Learning more about this relationship should facilitate the development of behavior management techniques that take into account peer relations.

In Chapter III the method and procedures used in the study are presented. The chapter is divided into five sections which are: statement of the null hypothesis, description of the subjects, description of instrumentation, description of data collection, and description of data analysis.

### Statement of the Null Hypothesis

There are no differences in the relationship between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance rating scores of pupils in the first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary schools.

### Subjects

For each of the three grades there were five classes of pupils taking part in the study. Ten pupils were randomly selected, using a table of random numbers, from each class. Each grade level thus contained 50 designated children. Two additional pupils in each class were randomly selected as alternates in case of the absence of designated pupils during the observation periods. One child left the school before the observation began; an alternate was used to replace the child.

The children were selected from five integrated elementary urban schools in a county of 125,000 people in north-central Florida. The principal of each school arranged for one first, third, and fifth grade level class to participate in the study.

## Instrumentation

### Direct Observation System

The direct observation system used to count frequency of disruptive behavior was a modification of a system developed by O'Leary and his associates for observing classroom behavior (O'Leary, Kaufman, Kass, & Drabman, 1970). The system included the following nine categories of disruptive behavior:

1. Out of chair
2. Touching
3. Playing
4. Noise
5. Non-compliance
6. Time off task
7. Vocalization
8. Orienting
9. Aggression. (Drabman & Lahey, 1974, pp. 592-593)

The description of each category was expanded for this study in order to clarify the characteristics of behavior that were recorded as disruptive. The complete observation instrument, with a precise description of each category, is contained in Appendix A.

Investigators using the original instrument (Drabman & Lahey, 1974; Drabman, Spitalnik, & Spitalnik, 1974) divided the number of perfect agreements by the number of agreements plus disagreements (for each category) between observers to determine reliability of the instrument. Perfect agreements included both commissions and omissions of disruptive behavior recorded by the observers in the appropriate category. Reliability averaged .86 and .97 for 84 and 50 observation days respectively.

Each observer had a stopwatch and tally sheet (a copy of the tally sheet is located in Appendix B). Observation was conducted

on a 20-second observe, 10-second record procedure for ten-minute intervals. An observer recorded each instance of disruptive behavior by marking the corresponding category of disruptive behavior on the tally sheet. The total number of disruptive behaviors for each designated pupil was determined by adding the total category numbers of disruptive behaviors that occurred during each pupil's specified three ten-minute observation periods.

Observer training. Nine university students of special education were trained in observing and counting disruptive behavior as defined in Appendix A. The first phase of the training sessions consisted of three one-hour meetings that included discussions and role playing that clarified the nine categories of disruptive behavior. In the next phase, the observers used tally sheets and stopwatches to record the disruptive behavior of pupils viewed on a videotape. The two sessions were 90 minutes each and included a follow-up discussion and a replay of the tape. At the end of the second week of training, the nine observers watched three 10-minute videotapes of pupils recorded in classrooms. The observers used their stopwatches and recorded the disruptive behavior of three designated pupils. The tally sheets were collected and examined in order to determine the inter-rater reliability. The formula (Johnson & Bolstad, 1973) used was






$$\frac{\# \text{ of agreements}}{\# \text{ of agreements} + \# \text{ of disagreements}}$$



Using the category method for calculating interobserver agreement (Repp, Dietz, Boles, Dietz, & Repp, 1976) an overall inter-rater reliability rate of .91 was achieved in the three consecutive videotape viewing sessions. Since .91 was greater than the .85 that is considered acceptable inter-rater reliability (Huck, Cormier, & Bounds, 1974), the team of observers was able to commence its actual classroom observations.

#### Peer Acceptance Rating Scale

The Peer Acceptance Rating Scale (Sheare, 1976) was used to determine the degree of likeability of each class member among his/her peers. The Peer Acceptance Rating Scale consists of a classmate's name followed by five statements matched with five simple drawings depicting facial expressions. The five faces range from a big frown to a big smile. A copy of the scale is contained in Appendix C. The statements presented to the students were

1. Don't like at all. 
2. Don't like. 
3. Don't know. 
4. Like. 
5. Like a lot. 

Every class member of the 15 classes completed a scale which included the names of every other student in his/her class, according to random order determined by a random number table. Each pupil was asked to describe how he/she felt about each classmate by marking the appropriate box. The instrument was administered to groups of four or five children from each class at one time.

Reliability data for the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale are based upon Sheare's (1976) two-month test-retest correlation coefficients of ratings made by total classes. The coefficients of the classrooms ranged from .83 to .95 and are based upon a randomly selected class sample of 155 subjects. The correlation across grades was .89.

In a pilot study, the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale was administered to 20 pupils. All children understood the relation between the pictures of the faces and the feelings those faces were supposed to express. The pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs were all able to complete the scale without difficulty.

### Data Collection

#### Direct Observation

The children from each of the 15 classes were selected using a table of random numbers. Each selected child was observed three times for ten-minute periods. An observer tallied a child's

disruptive behavior only one time; each child was observed by three different observers. Only one observer was engaged in counting disruptive behavior in a classroom during any given observation period.

The observations took place during a three-week period in May. Teachers provided schedules of instructional periods which involved the total class, e.g., social studies and language arts. Observation periods were scheduled during group learning activities in an attempt to make the format and time of the observation periods as uniform as possible.

#### Peer Acceptance Rating Scale

The Peer Acceptance Rating Scale was administered to all members of the 15 classes at the conclusion of the observation periods. Administering the rating scale in May insured that the pupils were well acquainted with their peers. The instrument was administered to groups of four and five children grouped randomly using a table of random numbers. Pupils were assured that their classmates and families would not know what their answers were. The importance of answering honestly was emphasized. The instructions given to each group of children are noted in Appendix D.

The peer rating score was determined from the ratings that each pupil received. The ratings were weighted as follows: Like a lot--5, like--4, don't know--3, don't like--2, and don't like at all--1. A peer acceptance rating score for each designated

pupil was determined by dividing the sum for each subject by the number of peer raters.

### Data Analysis

Data in the present study were analyzed by means of multiple regression procedures as outlined by Kerlinger and Pedhazur (1973). The procedures were used to regress peer acceptance rating scores on the total occurrences of disruptive behavior and grade level. Regression equations for each of the grade levels (first, third, and fifth) were calculated in order to determine if the slopes of the regression lines were significantly different. The discrepancy between the sum of the regression sums of squares from the separate  $b$ 's and the regression sum of squares obtained from the common  $b$  was tested in order to determine if the regression lines were parallel. The observed multiple  $R$  and the corresponding  $R^2$  were calculated. The  $F$ -ratio indicated whether the proportion of variance accounted for by the independent variables which entered the system was significant. As a further check for the presence of a relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the quadratic relationship between the variables was also examined in a similar fashion. The .05 level was used to determine significance. The data were analyzed using the Regression sub-program found in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1975).

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. The chapter has been divided into two major sections. Descriptive statistics which delineate the measures of central tendency and variability within the data are contained in the first section. The statistical results employed in testing for significant differences in the hypothesis can be found in the second section.

In this study, the relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance of pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs was assessed. The total occurrences of disruptive behavior were determined by directly observing 150 designated children, 50 from each of the selected grade programs. Peer acceptance rating scores, the dependent variable, were ascertained by administering the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale to the pupils. The independent variable, total occurrences of disruptive behavior, was used in order to determine if the relationship between the frequency of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance differed at the three selected grade levels. These relationships were evaluated by using multiple regression procedures. The data were analyzed using the regression subprogram found in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

### Descriptive Statistics

The means and standard deviations for total peer acceptance and total disruptive behavior for the total group ( $n=150$ ) of children as well as for each subgroup ( $n=50$ ) of children at each of the three grade levels are presented in Table 1. Each child's peer acceptance rating score and observed disruptive behavior score are listed in Appendix E. The intercorrelations of the dependent and independent variables are presented in a similar fashion in Table 2.

Through an examination of the data summarized in Table 1, it was found that the mean occurrences of disruptive behavior were similar at the three grade levels. The largest variability ( $SD = 31.77$ ) was found in children enrolled in fifth grade programs. The smallest variability ( $SD = 21.88$ ) was found in children enrolled in first grade programs. The ranges of total occurrences of disruptive behavior of children in the first, third, and fifth grade programs were 89, 140, and 128, respectively. In an examination of the data summarized in Table 2, it was found that only among children in first grade programs was the correlation between disruptive occurrences and peer acceptance rating scores significant,  $t(48) = 2.42$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Table 1

The Means and Standard Deviations for Observed  
Disruptive Behavior and Peer Acceptance Ratings

Variables	<u>1st Grade</u>		<u>3rd Grade</u>		<u>5th Grade</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Total Disruptions	46.96	21.88	42.64	25.43	47.68	31.77	45.76	26.59
Total Peer Acceptance	3.66	0.60	3.55	0.56	3.60	0.57	3.61	0.58

Table 2  
Intercorrelations for Observed Disruptive  
Behavior and Peer Acceptance Ratings

		Total Peer Acceptance	Total Disruptions
1st Grade	Total Peer Acceptance	1.000	-0.330*
	Total Disruptions	-0.330*	1.000
3rd Grade	Total Peer Acceptance	1.000	-0.060
	Total Disruptions	-0.060	1.000
5th Grade	Total Peer Acceptance	1.000	0.050
	Total Disruptions	0.050	1.000
Total	Total Peer Acceptance	1.000	-0.087
	Total Disruptions	-0.087	1.000

\*Significant at .05 level



### Testing the Hypothesis

Multiple regression procedures were used to determine if the linear and quadratic relationships between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance rating scores of pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs were significantly different. This section has been divided into two parts, corresponding to the examination of the linear and quadratic relationships.

#### Linear Relationship

The prediction equations for the relationship of peer acceptance as predicted from disruptive behavior for each of the grade programs are listed in Table 3.

Table 3  
Prediction Equations for  
Each of the Three Grade Programs

Grade Program	Prediction Equation for Total Disruptions (TD)
First Grade	$\hat{Y} = 4.08542 - 0.00910 \text{ TD}$
Third Grade	$\hat{Y} = 3.61043 - 0.00133 \text{ TD}$
Fifth Grade	$\hat{Y} = 3.56001 + 0.00091 \text{ TD}$

The independent variable of grade level was entered into the system by using an effect coding scheme (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973, pp. 172-185). The  $F$ -ratio for the differences between the

three slopes was calculated by comparing the sum of the regression sums of squares, obtained from totalling the sum of squares of total disruptions and the sum of squares of coded grade levels, with the regression sum of squares obtained from the interaction of disruptive behavior and the coded grade levels. The  $F$ -ratio for the differences between these slopes was found not to be significant,  $F(2,144) = 2.46$ ,  $p > .05$ . The prediction equation derived for all independent variables, listing partial regression coefficients ( $b$ ) and coefficients of correlation in standard score form ( $BETA$ ), is presented in Table 4. After all independent variables entered the system, the observed multiple  $R$  was 0.21599, with a corresponding  $R^2$  of 0.04655,  $F(5,144) = 1.4$ ,  $p > .05$ . The independent variables explained approximately 5% of the variance in the dependent variable, peer acceptance rating score; the  $F$ -ratio was found to be nonsignificant. Based on the statistical analyses in this section, the hypothesis that there is no difference in the relationship between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance rating scores for pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary school could not be rejected and thus was retained.

In a further analysis, the relationship between peer acceptance and disruptive behavior at each of the three levels separately, it was found that only the  $F$ -ratio at the first grade level was significant,  $F(1.48) = 5.87$ ,  $p < .025$ . When disruptive behavior, the independent variable, entered the system at the first grade level the observed multiple  $R$  was 0.33009,

with a corresponding  $\underline{R}^2$  of 0.10896. The  $\underline{R}^2$  indicated that disruptive behavior accounted for about 11% of the variance in the dependent variable, peer acceptance rating score, at the first grade level.

Table 4  
Prediction Equation for All Independent  
Variables Entering the Linear System

Variable	b	BETA
Constant	3.75195	
Total Disruptions (TD)	-0.00317	-0.14631
Coded Grade Level (D1)	0.33347	0.47382
Coded Grade Level (D2)	-0.14152	-0.20109
Interaction of TD X D1	-0.00593	-0.45874
Interaction of TD X D2	0.00185	0.14013

#### Quadratic Relationship

In addition to the variables entering the system for the linear relationship, the total disruptions were squared in order to investigate the quadratic relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance of pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs. An effect coding scheme was used again to enter all the independent variables into the system (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973).

The  $F$ -ratio for the differences between the three slopes was found not to be significant,  $F(2,141) = 2.83, p > .05$ . The prediction equation, with all independent variables entering the system, is presented in Table 5. The independent variables' respective partial regression coefficients ( $b$ ) and coefficients of correlation in standard score form ( $BETA$ ) are listed in Table 5. After all independent variables entered the system, the multiple  $R$  was 0.28884, with a corresponding  $R^2$  of 0.08343,  $F(8,141) = 1.60, p > .05$ . Again, based on the statistical analysis, the hypothesis that there is no difference in the relationship between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance rating scores for pupils in first, third, and fifth grade programs in elementary schools could not be rejected.

Table 5  
Prediction Equation for All Independent  
Variables Entering the Quadratic System

Variable	b	BETA
Constant	3.61257	
Total Disruptions (TD)	0.00298	0.13724
Coded Grade Level (D1)	0.02178	0.03095
Coded Grade Level (D2)	-0.24386	-0.34649
Interaction of TD X D1	0.00874	0.67631
Interaction of TD X D2	0.00610	0.46272
Square of TD (Q1)	-0.00006	-0.34640
Interaction of Q1 X D1	-0.00014	-0.87796
Interaction of Q1 X D2	-0.00002	-0.15732

### Summary of Results

In an examination of the statistics relevant to the hypothesis of the study, it was found that the relationship between the frequency of disruptive behavior exhibited by children and their peer acceptance among children in first, third, and fifth grades was not differentially determined. In examining the linear and quadratic relationships between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance rating scores, it was found that the relationships were not statistically significant when all independent variables entered the two systems. In the grade by grade analysis of the relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance it was determined that the correlation between total disruptive occurrences and peer acceptance rating scores among children in first grade programs was statistically significant.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Review of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine whether children in first, third, and fifth grade programs in public elementary schools differed in their reactions toward peers' disruptive behavior. Authors of research pertaining to teacher techniques for dealing with disruptive behavior in elementary schools have neglected largely the area of peer acceptance. The determination of how children at different grade levels have felt about their disruptive peers will help educators to understand the interpersonal dynamics within the classroom and, thus, help in formulating better strategies of behavior management.

#### Review of the Literature

Researchers have shown that behavioral characteristics have been associated with high and low sociometric status. Investigators studying the relationship between behavior characteristics of children and their status within the peer group have not utilized direct measures of behavior. Questionnaires, rating

scales, and personality tests cannot be considered true indicators of the child's actual classroom behavior.

Information concerning the relationship between the child's frequency of observed disruptive behavior and his/her peer acceptance may yield a clearer indication of the effect of a child's behavior on peers. Data pertaining to the theory that a child's grade level affects his/her attitude toward disruptive behavior may help to answer the question of whether sociometric status can be modified during the upper elementary grades. Some researchers have found that sociometric status cannot be changed, while others claim that they have changed the sociometric status of children by changing the social structure of the classroom.

Similarly, developmental psychologists have expressed differing opinions as to whether the age of a child, and thus his/her grade level, would affect his/her attitudes toward peers who violate classroom rules. The field is divided between theorists who have believed that all children go through similar age-related developmental stages accounting for their likeness in behavior patterns and those who have maintained that children develop strictly on an individual basis rooted in parent upbringing and cultural values. According to the latter theory, children have different developmental ages within different aspects of their personalities. Various theorists have suggested the need for research to investigate whether children are significantly affected by peers who exhibit high frequencies of disruptive behavior and whether this effect differs significantly at different grade levels.

### Review of Hypothesis

The hypothesis tested the linear and quadratic relationships between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance. The null hypothesis tested was that there is no difference in the relationship between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance rating scores of pupils in first, third, and fifth grades.

### Review of the Methods

Subjects in the study were 150 pupils of urban elementary public schools in a north-central Florida county of 125,000 people. The staff of the county school board approved the study. Requests were made to individual principals for permission to conduct the project in their schools. After receiving permission from five principals, teachers of elementary classes (grades one, three, and five) were asked to participate in the study. One class from the first, third, and fifth grade programs of each school was used in the project. Ten pupils were randomly selected using a table of random numbers for each class. The 150 pupils' disruptive behavior was observed and recorded according to the number and type of disturbance by nine trained university students of special education. Each pupil was observed on three different occasions by three different observers. The disruptive behavior category scale consisted of nine categories of behavior. The observers each recorded one child's behavior during each observation period



on a tally sheet. The observers used a stopwatch and observed on a 20-second observe and 10-second record basis. Each instance of disruptive behavior within a 20-second period was noted by a check. The total occurrences of disruptive behavior were computed for the three observation periods and each child's total disruptive score was calculated by adding up these sums.

After completing the observation period, all pupils in the 15 classes completed the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale, an instrument designed to measure the acceptance of each child within a class. The peer acceptance rating scores were calculated for each of the 150 designated pupils. The 50 observed children from each of grade levels one, three, and five had their peer acceptance rating scores regressed on their total occurrences of disruptive behavior. Multiple regression procedures were used to test whether the regression lines for the pupils in the first, third, and fifth grade programs were parallel.

### Summary of Findings

In an analysis of data relevant to the overall hypothesis of the study, it was found that the relationship between the frequency of disruptive behavior exhibited by children and their peer acceptance level in first, third, and fifth grade programs was not differentially determined. In examining the linear and quadratic relationships between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance rating scores, it was found that the relationships

were not statistically significant when all independent variables entered the two systems.

In a further examination of the data, it was found in the grade by grade analysis of the relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance that among children in first grade programs, the correlation between total disruptive occurrences and peer acceptance scores was statistically significant. The negative correlation may have indicated that children with high disruptive behavior totals tended to have low peer acceptance rating scores; those with low disruptive behavior scores tended to have high peer acceptance rating scores. The correlations between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance among children in third and fifth grade programs were found not to be statistically significant.

#### Interpretation and Literature Support

The finding of no significant differences in the overall relationship between frequency of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance of children in first, third, and fifth grade programs should have been expected, according to the theories of individual differences. Theorists (Ausubel & Sullivan, 1970; Baer, 1970; Dinkmeyer, 1965; Huston-Stein & Baltes, 1976) stated that the individual differences among children of the same age preclude the possibility of expecting children in the same grade to react similarly to their peers who have exhibited disruptive behavior.

They claimed that both a child's behavior and the criteria he/she used for evaluating others are based on the child's early upbringing and cultural value system. These theories of individual differences are apparently supported by the finding of no differences according to grade level in rating acceptability of disruptive peers when all the pupils' scores were entered and analyzed together.

It should be mentioned that when the data were further examined, a prediction equation for children at each grade level was calculated and results were found that could dispute the theories of individual differences. The relationship of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance was significant for children at the first grade level. This finding, which will be examined in the next portion of this section, may make it possible to view a child's grade level as a factor to be considered when designing a behavior management scheme that takes peer acceptance into account.

In the analysis of the data on a grade by grade basis, it was found that the ratings of pupils in first grade programs tended to be negatively affected by their peers' disruptive behavior. This finding is supported by the work of other researchers (Bonney, 1955; Bonney & Powell, 1953). In their studies, they found that first and second grade children with high sociometric status conformed more to classroom requirements than did children with low sociometric status. Harris (1946) noted that young children were particularly aware of any attention-getting and non-conforming

behavior on the part of their peers. Because of this awareness of "acting-out" behaviors, pupils in first grade programs may have judged their disruptive peers as less acceptable.

In the grade by grade analysis of the correlation coefficients, between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance, it was found that no relationship existed between peer acceptance and disruptive behavior for pupils in third and fifth grade programs. This finding could have been expected according to both Piaget's (1932) theory of the consciousness of rules, and the child's drive for affiliation (Crandall, 1967). According to these theories, children in first grade programs relied on the behavior standards imposed by adults. Young children would have been expected to disapprove of peers who were disruptive and who did not adhere to the ordered rules of the teacher. Both theories stated that as children got older they were expected to move away from adult imposed values toward peer imposed values. These theories could have justified the finding of a non-significant relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance for children in third and fifth grade programs. It may have been feasible that children in middle and upper elementary grade programs did not feel that the rules for behavior imposed by the teacher were as important to follow as did the younger children. Older pupils may have felt that "acting-out" against rules imposed by adults was not reason to rate these children as less acceptable than children who did not exhibit large amounts of disruptive behavior.

The statistically significant negative correlation between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance for pupils in first grade programs, the small negative correlation among pupils in third grade programs, and the small positive correlation among pupils in fifth grade programs may be indicative of a trend. In their rating of peer acceptance, older children may be less concerned about their peers' disruptive behavior than younger children. This trend may be justified by the increasingly strong need to conform to the values of peers as children grow older (Crandall, 1967; Piaget, 1932).

After analyzing the results of this study various interpretations are possible. The issue of whether individual differences or stages of development affect the child's attitudes toward his/her peers has not been resolved; hence, there is a need for further research in this area.

#### Problems and Limitations

There were several problems and limitations in collecting the data that should be considered when interpreting the results of this research study. The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between frequency of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance. In the examination of disruptive behavior, there was a focus on the overall frequency of disruptive behavior, without separate consideration of the nine categories of disruptive behavior. Since some types of disruptive behavior may not

be viewed negatively by members of a peer group, it might be helpful to examine the relationship between the frequency of disruptive behavior within each category and peer acceptance. Through such an investigation it might be possible to learn how specific types of disruptive behavior affect sociometric status.

In examining the results of this study, it appeared that it was impossible to determine if the disruptive behavior of a child had an effect on the peers' ratings of his/her acceptance. Rather than behavior patterns, appearance, academic skills, or athletic ability may have been the crucial factor for peers' designating the child acceptable. A possible remedy for this problem may be to ask each child the reason why he/she liked or disliked another child.

A precise examination of the specific characteristics of disruptive behavior and their effects was a difficult undertaking. In this study, the feasibility of determining the frequency of disruptive behavior was demonstrated. The actual parameters of each instance of disruptive behavior, however, could not have been determined. Intents of disruptive behavior ranged from causing laughter to physically hurting another child. A more valuable observation instrument should examine both the intent and the effect of each instance of disruptive behavior. The immediate effects of the child's disruptive behavior could be noted by examining the responses of classmates and teachers to the disruptive act. Possible peer and teacher responses include

laughing, belittling, ignoring, and yelling. The determination of the intent and the effect of disruptive behavior is a difficult process that must be attempted in order to understand more fully the disruptive pupil and his/her effects on classmates and teacher.

Another instrumentation problem concerned the pupils' responses on the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale. There was no assurance that the pupils' responses corresponded with their actual feelings toward peers. Observation of the child's interactions with classmates might add to the overall view of whom that child likes or dislikes. Caution must be considered with this procedure, also, due to the possibility that a child's positive or negative responses for another child may not be expressed in action. For example, a shy child may feel positively toward another child but may be unable to actually interact in a friendly manner.

#### Practical Implications

There are a number of practical implications that can be derived from the findings of this study. The finding that first grade pupils may have been negatively affected by their peers' disruptive behavior when making choices of peer acceptability has importance for teachers of first grade classes. Teachers must make an effort to modify the disruptive behavior of their pupils in order to improve these children's sociometric status. Sociometric

investigators have found that without direct adult intervention, a child's sociometric status remains fairly constant throughout his/her school career. Many parents and teachers of disruptive children have held the attitude that the young disruptive child "will grow out of this problem." One possible implication that may be drawn from the findings of this study is that the problems of the young disruptive child must not be minimized; the parents and teachers of such a child must be aware of the child's difficulties and must be prepared to intervene with the best possible management strategies.

It may be meaningful to teachers and administrators that pupils in the third and fifth grade programs did not rate children who exhibited disruptive behavior significantly lower than their other classmates on the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale. Children at the third and fifth grade levels seem to be more concerned with their peers' concept of what is acceptable or unacceptable. Violations by children of teacher imposed rules evidently are not behaviors that bother classmates. Teachers should ensure that the formulation and imposition of classroom rules become more of a group venture rather than a teacher's edict. If the children, as a peer group, take part in the determination of the class rules they may be more concerned with adhering to those rules. The rules then become part of the peer value system, rather than imposed adult guidelines.

Through the observation of disruptive behavior, there was evidence of wide individual differences in the behavior patterns



of children. In order for teachers to be able to select the most appropriate techniques for modifying the behavior of individual children, the teachers must rely on observation instruments to measure the actual behavior of those pupils. Determining patterns of behavior such as the number of times a child is off task or out of his/her seat may give the teacher clues in restructuring the child's academic and behavior programs. Each child acts in an individual manner, and the teacher must be willing to design individual educational and behavioral strategies to meet the needs of that particular pupil.

Another practical implication of this study is for teachers to administer the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale two or three times a year. Teachers using this tool would be able to gain insight as to which children are having peer adjustment problems. Taking this information into account, teacher would be able to consider the sociometric status of their pupils when designing behavior management programs. It is also important for teachers to consider the possible effects a particular management system may have on a pupil's sociometric status. By using the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale, teachers can determine any changes in the sociometric status of a given pupil.

#### Suggestions for Future Research

In this study, it was found that while there is no significant difference in the overall hypothesis, the results approach

significance to the degree that further investigation is merited. The relationship between disruptive behavior and peer acceptance was found to be significant for pupils in first grade programs. A study comparing this relationship between children in first grade programs and sixth grade programs would help to determine whether the correlations between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance differ for upper and lower grade pupils.

Teachers have asked for help in dealing with disruptive pupils. A possible reason for the increase in disruptive behavior in classrooms may be that children are not as disturbed by the nature or degree of some disruptive behaviors as teachers are. In attempting to determine the disturbingness of disruptive behavior on teachers and children, a study might be conducted asking all class members which classmates are most disturbing to them and who they think are most disturbing to teachers. Teachers would also respond to the questions so that it could be determined if the same children are most disturbing to the pupils and teacher. This information should be compared with the recorded scores of the child's observed disruptive behavior. By examining the disruptive behavior tally sheets of the children who were designated most disturbing by teachers and classmates it would be possible to determine what types of disruptive behaviors are most disturbing to both children and teachers.

Finally, another avenue for future research would be a longitudinal study of a group of children's disruptive behavior and peer acceptance throughout their elementary school years.

The children's frequency of disruptive behavior would be systematically observed and recorded in the fall and spring of each school year. The designated children's classmates would complete the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale following each of the observation periods. By examining the changes in both the children's frequency of disruptive behavior and peer acceptance rating scores over the years it may be possible to determine the constancy of these two measures. The relationship between disruptive behavior frequency and peer acceptance could be computed for the children at each succeeding year, thus determining if the changes in direction of one measure were accompanied by similar changes of the other measure.

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APPENDIX A  
DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR CATEGORY SCALE

1. OUT OF CHAIR: CHILD MOVES FROM CHAIR WHEN NOT PERMITTED OR REQUESTED BY THE TEACHER. NO PART OF THE CHILD'S BODY IS TO BE TOUCHING THE CHAIR. (STANDING UP; WALKING AROUND; RUNNING; HOPPING; JUMPING)
2. TOUCHING: CHILD USES HAND OR EXTENSION OF THE HAND TO TOUCH OTHERS' PROPERTY. (GRABBING OR HANDLING OBJECTS SUCH AS PAPERS, PENCILS, BOOKS, PERSONAL BELONGINGS, TAKING OVER SUCH OBJECTS WITHOUT PERMISSION; ANNOYING AND BOTHERING OTHERS BY PULLING AT THEIR CLOTHES, TAPPING THEIR SHOULDERS OR ARMS, TOUCHING THEIR BELONGINGS WHILE THEY ARE BUSY)
3. PLAYING: CHILD USES HANDS TO PLAY WITH OWN OR COMMUNITY PROPERTY WHEN SUCH BEHAVIOR IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH LEARNING. (CURRENT TASK SPECIFIED BY TEACHER; PLAYS WITH PENCIL WHEN SUPPOSED TO BE WRITING)
4. NOISE: CHILD CREATES ANY AUDIBLE NOISE OTHER THAN APPROPRIATE VOCALIZATION OR VERBALIZATION. (USING OBJECTS TO CREATE AUDIBLE NOISE; CLAPPING; TAPPING FEET; RATTLING OR TEARING PAPER) [DO NOT INCLUDE ACCIDENTAL DROPPING OF OBJECTS.]

5. NON-COMPLIANCE: CHILD FAILS TO INITIATE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE REQUESTED BY TEACHER. (RESISTS DOING WHAT IS EXPECTED OR REQUESTED, CHILD SAYS NO, I WON'T DO IT; CHILD PULLS AWAY FROM TEACHER OR GROUP; CHILD ACTS AS IF HE HASN'T HEARD DIRECTIONS OR INITIATES OWN ACTIVITY WHICH IS IN-COMPATIBLE WITH ASSIGNED TASK)
6. TIME OFF-TASK: CHILD DOES NOT DO ASSIGNED WORK FOR ENTIRE 20-SECOND INTERVAL. FOR EXAMPLE CHILD DOES NOT WRITE OR READ WHEN SO ASSIGNED.
7. VOCALIZATION: ANY UNPERMITTED AUDIBLE SOUND EMANATING FROM THE MOUTH. (YELLING; TALKING LOUDLY UNNECESSARILY; MAKING NOISES; CALLING OUT; SWEARING; LAUGHING LOUDLY; WHISTLING; COUGHING LOUDLY; CARRYING ON CONVERSATIONS WHEN NOT PERMITTED; ANSWERS TEACHERS WITHOUT RAISING HAND OR WITHOUT BEING CALLED ON)
8. ORIENTING: CHILD TURNS HEAD OR HEAD AND BODY TO LOOK AT ANOTHER PERSON; SHOWS OBJECTS TO ANOTHER CHILD; ATTENDS TO ANOTHER CHILD. (THE TURNING OR ORIENTING RESPONSE IS NOT RATED UNLESS THE CHILD IS SEATED OR IS IN REQUIRED POSITION FOR TASK AND THE TURN MUST BE MORE THAN 90° USING THE DESK OR TEACHER'S POSITION AS A REFERENCE POINT)

9. AGGRESSION: CHILD MAKES MOVEMENT TOWARDS ANOTHER PERSON SO AS TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH HIM, WHETHER DIRECTLY OR BY USING A MATERIAL OBJECT AS AN EXTENSION OF THE HAND. (HITTING; SHOIVING; KICKING; PINCHING; SLAPPING; STRIKING WITH OBJECT; THROWING OBJECT AT ANOTHER PERSON; POKING WITH OBJECT; BITING; PULLING HAIR)

APPENDIX B  
OBSERVER TALLY SHEET

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
Total									

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Class

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Observer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grand Total











APPENDIX C

PEER ACCEPTANCE RATING SCALE

# PEER ACCEPTANCE RATING SCALE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class # 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex B G

1 2 ID. Number \_\_\_\_\_

						Like A Lot	Don't Know	Don't Like	Like At All						
	Like A Lot	Like	Don't Know	Don't Like	Like At All						Like A Lot	Like	Don't Know	Don't Like	Like At All
1	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					13	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
2	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					14	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
3	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					15	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
4	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					16	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
5	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					17	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
6	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					18	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
7	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					19	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
8	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					20	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
9	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					21	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
10	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					22	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
11	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					23	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
12	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E					24	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E

## APPENDIX D

### INSTRUCTION FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RATING SCALE

Each group of four or five children were seated at desks in a semi-circle. The children faced a 22" by 50" chart that listed the names of all of the children in their class exactly as the names appeared on the individual Peer Acceptance Rating Scale that was placed on each child's desk

Say: "Good morning. People who work with children in school are always interested in how children feel about themselves and each other. If we know how you feel, we can help make school a better place for you. But, we need your help."

The children were asked to look at the chart and state whose class appeared on the chart. When they all agreed that it was their class, and when each child found his/her name on the chart and on the individual rating scale, the actual rating process began.

Say: "It is very important that you answer these questions as honestly as you can. Always answer them as you feel, not how you think you should feel. These questions are not tests--there are no right or wrong answers. I want to know how you honestly feel about the children in your class and about yourself. These



papers will not be shown to anyone--not your parents or teachers of classmates. So, answer them honestly. I want you to mark the box which best describes your feelings about each child."

(Pointing to the corresponding faces on the chart.) Say:  
"If you like someone a lot, you have a big smile when you think of him/her, and you will mark the box over the A on your paper. If you like someone, you have a smile when you think of him/her, and you will mark the box over the B on your paper.' If you don't know how you feel about someone, you don't have a smile or a frown when you think about him/her, and you will mark the box over the C on your paper. If you don't like someone, you have a small frown when you think of him/her, and you will mark the box over the D on your paper. If you don't like someone at all, you have a big frown when you think of him/her, and you will mark the box over the E on your paper. Now, we are ready to begin. All of you have two pieces of cardboard to cover your papers as you mark your choice. Remember, do not look at anyone else's paper or show yours to anyone. Mark the box which honestly shows your feelings toward the child on each line. When you are finished, turn your paper over and raise your hand. If you cannot read a name or if you have any questions, raise your hand, and I will come over to help you. You may begin. Remember, answer each one honestly."

If a child is absent, individual time for administering the Peer Acceptance Rating Scale will be arranged within the first two or three days after the child's return to school.

APPENDIX E

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR SCORES AND PEER  
ACCEPTANCE SCORES FOR ALL PUPILS

Table E-1

Disruptive Behavior Scores (by Category and Total) and Peer Acceptance  
Scores for Pupils in First Grade Programs

Pupil	Out of		Non					Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
	Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Off Task	Vocalization				
#1	2	3	0	2	0	5	8	3	0	23	4.000
#2	4	3	17	5	0	8	15	0	0	52	3.167
#3	1	1	11	1	0	2	14	11	0	41	4.333
#4	0	0	5	1	0	7	10	4	0	27	3.917
#5	8	6	0	1	2	8	22	10	1	58	2.583
#6	7	0	2	0	0	10	10	8	0	37	3.250
#7	0	0	0	1	0	8	1	5	0	15	3.875
#8	9	2	5	4	0	2	4	4	0	30	3.125
#9	0	0	1	0	0	0	8	4	0	13	3.333
#10	6	1	4	2	0	4	5	11	0	33	3.750
#11	2	2	4	2	0	3	6	0	0	19	3.710
#12	18	1	9	0	0	17	24	3	0	72	3.742

Table E-1 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Non Compliance	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#13	3	4	5	0	0	3	12	2	0	29	3.871
#14	11	1	6	2	0	12	12	9	0	53	3.129
#15	20	6	14	1	0	9	33	0	0	83	2.871
#16	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	2	0	9	3.935
#17	9	1	2	1	0	1	14	3	0	31	4.129
#18	25	4	2	0	0	0	27	0	0	58	3.871
#19	6	2	4	0	0	5	16	0	0	33	3.714
#20	2	2	5	3	0	11	12	3	0	38	3.129
#21	4	6	3	0	0	3	29	1	0	46	3.870
#22	11	5	28	5	3	21	20	4	1	98	2.956
#23	3	4	0	0	0	1	27	3	1	39	3.913
#24	7	0	6	5	1	12	15	12	2	60	4.304
#25	4	11	9	1	1	0	16	8	0	50	4.435
#26	5	15	8	0	2	10	16	10	1	67	3.043
#27	0	3	19	0	0	11	9	6	0	48	2.956

Table E-1 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#28	17	3	11	3	0	0	18	18	15	6	91	2.609
#29	9	8	10	0	3	3	5	16	3	0	54	4.217
#30	2	1	10	1	1	1	0	10	6	2	33	3.174
#31	13	1	4	0	0	0	4	11	4	0	37	4.478
#32	2	0	5	2	0	0	3	23	0	0	35	2.348
#33	3	2	0	0	0	0	3	14	2	0	21	4.696
#34	19	2	11	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	49	4.565
#35	10	3	1	0	0	0	2	23	4	0	43	4.565
#36	4	3	2	0	0	0	0	15	2	1	27	3.435
#37	20	1	3	0	2	2	10	17	3	0	56	3.087
#38	14	0	18	5	0	0	18	21	0	0	76	3.174
#39	22	3	12	1	1	1	12	32	4	0	87	4.130
#40	7	3	3	0	0	0	2	20	0	0	35	2.826
#41	5	9	8	0	0	0	13	21	6	0	62	3.393
#42	13	2	14	5	0	0	16	21	13	0	84	3.500

Table E-1 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#43	6	1	3	1	0	0	9	11	7	0	38	4.321
#44	4	2	1	4	0	0	5	12	10	0	37	4.321
#45	18	2	12	0	0	0	26	21	10	0	89	2.607
#46	7	1	2	5	0	0	3	23	6	0	47	3.500
#47	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	7	9	0	21	4.071
#48	14	0	1	0	0	0	0	16	5	0	36	4.357
#49	5	6	8	0	0	0	8	37	4	0	68	4.071
#50	14	5	3	1	0	0	4	29	3	1	60	3.857

Table E-2  
Disruptive Behavior Scores (by Category and Total) and Peer Acceptance  
Scores for Pupils in Third Grade Programs

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#1	0	0	7	0	0	7	16	2	0	0	32	3.448
#2	4	0	4	2	0	3	7	1	0	0	21	3.034
#3	2	0	3	1	0	13	7	0	0	0	26	4.379
#4	4	0	5	1	0	6	3	0	0	0	19	3.655
#5	2	2	2	0	0	1	13	4	0	0	24	3.310
#6	3	2	7	0	0	4	5	2	0	0	23	3.517
#7	1	1	4	0	0	1	4	1	4	0	16	4.069
#8	13	2	19	0	2	16	12	6	0	0	70	3.172
#9	4	1	8	3	0	10	18	6	0	0	50	3.828
#10	1	0	2	0	0	8	7	3	0	0	21	4.103
#11	1	1	4	0	0	12	16	0	0	0	35	3.800
#12	1	0	1	1	0	0	9	0	0	0	12	3.633

Table E-2 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Non Compliance	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#13	4	3	3	0	0	0	11	4	0	25	2.833
#14	9	0	3	1	1	8	10	2	0	34	3.367
#15	0	2	3	0	0	10	11	1	0	27	3.833
#16	16	3	9	1	0	7	26	2	2	66	4.000
#17	2	1	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	22	3.800
#18	4	0	5	0	0	3	2	2	0	16	3.167
#19	9	0	6	0	0	5	7	1	0	28	3.167
#20	0	0	11	0	0	14	20	1	0	46	3.367
#21	9	4	9	1	0	8	16	6	0	53	4.654
#22	7	4	7	2	0	17	12	3	0	47	3.808
#23	9	4	1	0	0	10	14	3	1	42	3.538
#24	2	0	3	1	0	6	6	2	0	20	3.654
#25	8	3	3	0	0	2	28	4	2	50	2.961
#26	5	2	6	1	0	15	17	10	0	56	2.538
#27	5	2	2	0	0	5	16	3	1	34	2.461



Table E-2 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#28	2	2	3	1	0	0	8	15	0	0	31	4.346
#29	4	0	5	1	0	0	4	6	4	0	24	3.731
#30	1	0	6	1	0	0	15	17	5	0	45	2.154
#31	7	0	5	0	0	0	1	17	1	0	31	3.143
#32	5	1	10	1	0	0	2	26	2	2	49	3.821
#33	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	26	4	0	37	2.893
#34	16	5	7	1	0	0	6	38	16	2	91	3.893
#35	16	0	0	2	0	0	13	30	0	0	61	3.714
#36	18	0	25	4	0	0	25	13	4	0	89	3.250
#37	18	0	4	1	0	0	10	23	5	0	61	3.464
#38	22	0	2	1	0	0	1	25	1	0	52	3.071
#39	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	22	11	0	41	3.429
#40	4	6	0	3	0	0	29	27	4	0	73	3.464
#41	2	0	2	0	0	0	24	1	7	0	36	3.654
#42	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	6	2.730

Table E-2 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#43	10	1	4	1	3	7	21	0	0	0	47	3.423
#44	16	9	23	11	4	29	40	4	0	0	146	2.654
#45	13	6	9	1	0	11	16	0	0	0	56	4.538
#46	3	2	2	0	0	4	6	8	0	0	25	4.038
#47	5	0	6	0	0	25	10	8	0	0	54	3.961
#48	15	11	19	2	0	27	17	3	0	0	94	4.423
#49	5	0	8	3	0	15	10	14	0	0	55	3.885
#50	3	1	1	1	0	1	15	0	0	0	22	4.730

Table E-3  
Disruptive Behavior Scores (by Category and Total) and Peer Acceptance  
Scores for Pupils in Fifth Grade Programs

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#1	18	6	16	5	0	0	12	28	6	0	91	2.586
#2	9	1	19	1	1	1	12	33	2	0	78	4.034
#3	6	6	12	0	0	0	12	25	4	0	65	3.552
#4	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	18	5	1	28	3.310
#5	4	4	10	0	0	0	0	15	3	0	36	4.379
#6	1	0	21	0	0	0	21	20	4	0	67	3.655
#7	3	1	33	2	0	0	14	30	8	0	91	3.931
#8	4	1	15	1	0	0	0	5	1	1	28	3.034
#9	6	9	13	8	0	0	1	14	5	0	56	4.000
#10	11	7	7	3	0	0	4	28	11	1	72	4.172
#11	0	0	5	1	0	0	6	15	2	0	29	2.867
#12	3	3	1	0	0	0	8	19	3	0	37	2.333

Table E-3 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	10	4.300
#14	1	6	3	0	0	0	7	23	5	0	45	3.700
#15	4	3	9	3	0	0	22	32	6	0	79	3.200
#16	2	1	3	0	0	0	10	11	4	0	31	3.833
#17	8	0	1	0	0	0	4	5	2	0	20	3.967
#18	9	6	2	0	0	0	14	19	5	1	56	1.933
#19	5	3	3	0	0	0	8	12	1	0	32	4.200
#20	8	0	0	1	0	0	4	17	1	0	31	3.567
#21	0	1	8	1	1	1	0	8	2	0	21	3.500
#22	1	0	4	0	12	12	6	15	12	0	51	3.733
#23	0	1	5	0	2	2	2	12	16	0	38	3.900
"	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	9	3.800
#25	1	3	7	0	0	0	2	7	4	0	24	4.033
#26	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	6	3.167
#27	2	0	4	0	0	0	9	8	7	0	30	1.900

Table E-3 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Non									Peer	
		Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Acceptance	
#28	8	3	12	2	0	15	10	10	1	61	3.500	
#29	0	3	9	0	0	3	21	10	0	46	3.700	
#30	1	0	8	0	0	1	1	1	0	12	2.733	
#31	0	5	21	3	0	27	19	1	0	76	3.714	
#32	3	3	5	0	0	5	18	2	0	36	3.190	
#33	8	2	10	0	0	17	18	0	0	55	3.571	
#34	4	1	20	1	0	36	10	10	1	83	3.762	
#35	3	1	0	0	0	4	32	9	0	49	3.481	
#36	8	2	13	2	16	8	10	8	0	67	3.524	
#37	2	0	2	2	0	5	23	1	0	35	3.381	
#38	13	0	10	4	0	5	16	3	0	51	3.529	
#39	0	0	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	4.048	
#40	3	0	1	0	0	10	22	1	0	37	3.762	
#41	13	9	11	2	1	35	37	17	0	125	3.240	
#42	2	1	1	0	1	1	4	3	0	11	4.280	

Table E-3 Continued

Pupil	Out of Chair	Touching	Playing	Noise	Compliance	Non	Off Task	Vocalization	Orienting	Aggression	Total	Peer Acceptance
#43	3	7	14	0	0	0	50	29	26	0	129	4.080
#44	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	6	4.400
#45	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	5	2	0	12	3.800
#46	5	2	2	0	0	0	2	9	4	0	24	4.080
#47	25	8	17	1	0	0	44	31	7	1	134	4.480
#48	7	3	16	4	0	0	7	13	1	0	51	3.920
#49	4	2	2	2	0	0	3	7	7	0	27	3.040
#50	17	9	2	1	0	0	23	27	7	3	89	3.720

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Odey Raviv was born June 14, 1949, in Tel Aviv, Israel. His parents immigrated to the United States to pursue college educations in 1950. He spent his preschool years in Troy, New York. After his father's graduation, he spent six years in New York City completing elementary school. In 1960, he became a naturalized United States citizen.

Mr. Raviv graduated from Great Neck North Senior High School in 1966. He attended Wilkes College from 1966 to 1968. He spent his junior year abroad at Tel Aviv University. Returning to Wilkes College in 1969, Mr. Raviv received his Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology in 1970.


Beginning September, 1970, Mr. Raviv enrolled in graduate school at Hofstra University, where he earned his Master of Science degree in elementary education in 1972. During this time, Mr. Raviv began his employment in the New York City Public School where he was employed as a teacher for retarded and behavior disordered children from March, 1971, until June, 1975.

Mr. Raviv entered graduate school at the University of Florida in September, 1975. Since that time, he has been studying toward the Doctor of Philosophy degree, majoring in special education of the emotionally disturbed and minoring in early childhood education.

Odey Raviv is married to Lois Jean Schucart. Mr. Raviv is a member of the Council for Exceptional Children, Division for Children with Behavioral Disorders, Division for Early Childhood, Teacher Educators of Children with Behavior Disorders, and the National Association for Education of Young Children.

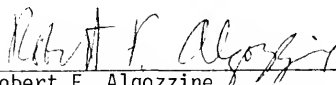


I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.




Mary K. Dykes, Chairperson  
Associate Professor of Special  
Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Robert F. Algozzine  
Assistant Professor of Special  
Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Michael L. Hanes  
Associate Professor of General  
Teacher Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



William R. Reid  
Professor of Special Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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William B. Ware  
Professor of Foundations of  
Education

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Special Education in the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

June 1978

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Dean, Graduate School

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